

Merced to Fresno Project Section: Central Valley Wye



PROJECT SECTION OVERVIEW

The Central Valley Wye serves as the backbone of the High-Speed Rail system connecting the San Francisco Bay Area to Southern California. The Merced to Fresno Project Section, where the Central Valley Wye is located, generally parallels State Route 99 through the northern stretch of the San Joaquin Valley from the city of Merced to the city of Fresno. The Central Valley Wye is located near the City of Chowchilla and will serve as the junction for the high-speed rail system connecting San Jose to Fresno, San Jose to Merced, and Merced to Fresno. These connections allow travelers to reach destinations in the direction of San Francisco, Sacramento, and Los Angeles.

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) Board certified the Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIR/EIS) for the Merced to Fresno Project Section in May 2012. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) issued the Record of Decision in September 2012. At that time, the Board determined that Central Valley Wye alternatives should be further developed and evaluated in a subsequent environmental analysis. Since 2012, the Authority has worked with Central Valley stakeholders and agencies to identify a range of alignment alternatives for the Central Valley Wye. The Authority considered input from stakeholders and regulatory agencies and used it to prepare the Merced to Fresno Project Section: Central Valley Wye Alternatives Supplemental Alternatives Analysis Report in April 2013. This alternatives analysis included an evaluation of 14 alternatives, which were narrowed down to four alternatives. After further consultation with regulatory agencies, the Authority staff refined these alternatives and recommended in August 2014 that three of the four be subject to more detailed evaluation in a Supplemental EIR/EIS.

PROJECT SECTION HIGHLIGHTS

- Links the Silicon Valley with the Central Valley with dedicated high-speed train tracks in a grade separated and protected corridor.
- Provides connections from San Jose to Fresno, San Jose to Merced and Merced to Fresno.

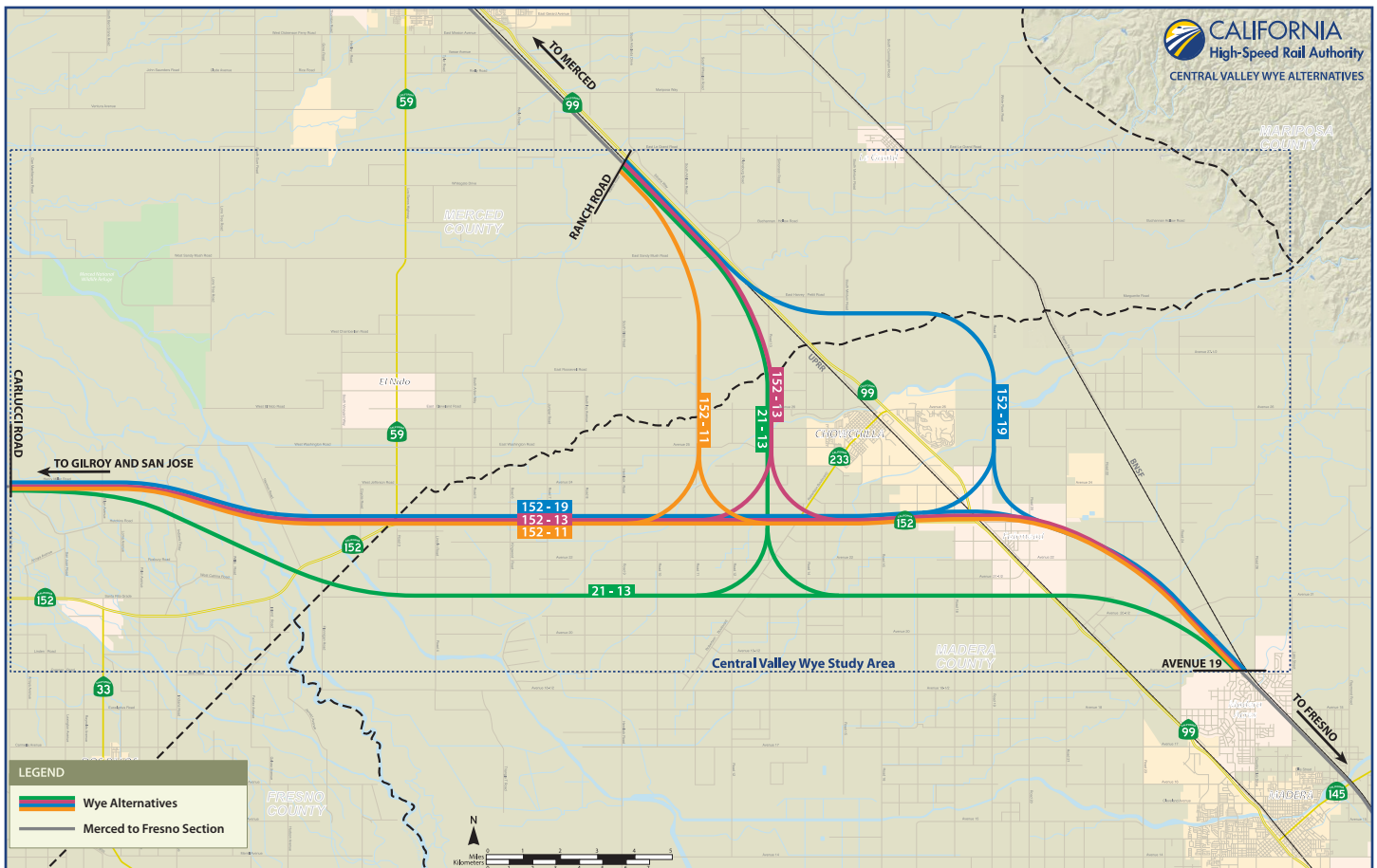
CURRENT STATUS OF THE CENTRAL VALLEY WYE

Authority staff have continued to engage with stakeholders and regulatory agencies as part of the environmental process, and through this process an alternative that was previously set aside has emerged as having potential environmental benefits that warrants further consideration. In June 2016, the Board of Directors approved the advancement of additional alignment alternatives to continue the environmental review process.

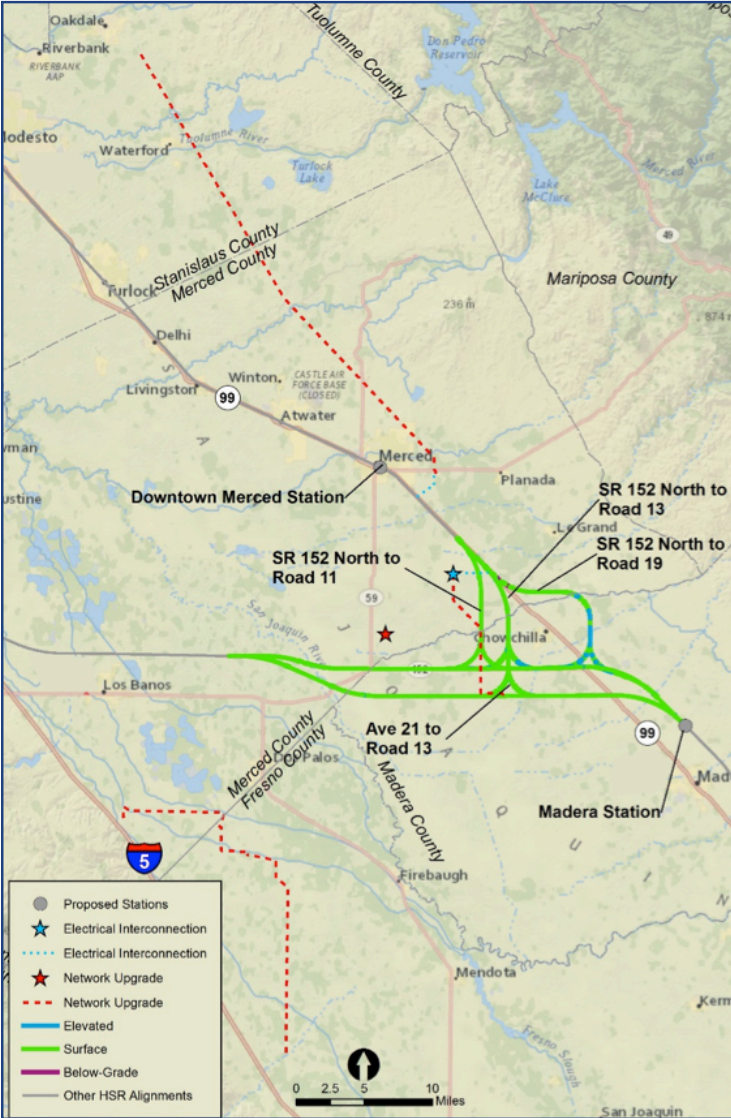
The four alternatives recommended to be studied and evaluated in the Merced to Fresno Project Section: Central Valley Wye Supplemental EIR/EIS are:

- **State Route 152 (North) to Road 13 Wye Alternative**
- **State Route 152 (North) to Road 19 Wye Alternative**
- **Avenue 21 to Road 13 Wye Alternative**
- **State Route 152 (North) to Road 11 Wye Alternative**

ALTERNATIVES RECOMMENDED FOR STUDY IN THE MERCED TO FRESNO PROJECT SECTION: CENTRAL VALLEY WYE SUPPLEMENTAL EIR/EIS



MERCED TO FRESNO PROJECT SECTION: CENTRAL VALLEY WYE SUPPLEMENTAL EIR/EIS STUDY AREA (INCLUDING ELECTRICAL INTERCONNECTIONS AND NETWORK UPGRADES)



The Supplemental EIR/EIS will also evaluate electrical interconnection facilities (i.e., Traction Power Substation, switching stations and parallel stations) and network upgrades that would connect the Central Valley Wye to the statewide electrical grid and facilities owned by Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E).

TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES

2009	Scoping meetings held in San Jose, Gilroy and Merced (NO/NOP)	PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT
2010-2015	Preliminary Alternatives Analysis Supplemental Alternatives Analysis Project Update and Stakeholder Engagement	
2016	Continued Development of Alternatives Addition of new alternative in response to community and regulatory agency input	
2017	Identification if a Preliminary Preferred Alternative Draft Environmental Document Public Hearing Final Environmental Document	

HIGH-SPEED RAIL WILL BETTER CONNECT THE STATE AND IMPROVE OUR REGIONS IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:



Increase Mobility

Improve mobility in the face of growth – with the state's population estimated to reach 50 million by 2050.



Needed Alternative

Provide a more convenient and productive way to travel and new opportunities to collaborate on business.



Better Air Quality

Improve air quality – by shifting people from cars and planes to clean trains.



Job Growth

Stimulate job growth across the state – now with construction and long-term with maintenance and operations.

ABOUT THE HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY

The California High-Speed Rail Authority is responsible for planning, designing, building and operating the first high-speed rail system in the nation. California high-speed rail will connect the mega-regions of the state, contribute to economic development and a cleaner environment, create jobs and preserve agricultural and protected lands. By 2029, the system will run from San Francisco to the Los Angeles basin in under three hours at speeds capable of over 200 miles per hour. The system will eventually extend to Sacramento and San Diego, totaling 800 miles with up to 24 stations. In addition, the Authority is working with regional partners to implement a state-wide rail modernization plan that will invest billions of dollars in local and regional rail lines to meet the state's 21st century transportation needs.



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